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5 July 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Project Administrative Officer

SUBJECT : Report of Trip to the [redacted] and
Watertown Site, 25 - 30 July 1956

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1. [redacted] It was very interesting and informative to see the layout of the Depot, meet the crew, and observe the efficient work being done. I went over the new T/O with [redacted] and he was most pleased with the additions. He was certain that when he has all the personnel provided in the T/O that they will be able to do the job. At present he has four men from the 4070th helping get Base C supplies packed. Everything at the Depot suggests a high degree of organization and a very cooperative spirit prevailing. The morale of the men seems exceptionally good, and there seems to be no personnel problems or conflicts.

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2. Watertown

a. Test Site

(1) [redacted] stated that it was rumored that Lockheed is pulling out the flight line crew some time in the near future. This will cause a severe curtailment of the service that needs to be provided. There are two T-33's, one L-20, one C-47, and one C-54 assigned to the Base. In addition, SAC has two 33's and one C-47, and Westinghouse has a C-47 at the Base. If the necessary first echelon maintenance plus re-fueling is not to be provided by Lockheed, other arrangements must be made.

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(2) [redacted] still does not believe that a total of 13 firemen are needed. He stated that according to AF Planning Document 150-1, the structural requirements of the Base and the fact that rescue service is not needed on a 24-hour basis, such a large force is not called for. He doesn't think the housing and work space are adequate for that number of AF personnel. Civilians have been putting up with existing conditions, but he does not believe the airmen will. He says that if he does get the full compliment of thirteen, he will keep a very critical eye on the men, and the ones who don't "cut the buck" to his satisfaction will be released.

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(3) The Site can start taking a few of the Base C people the first week in August and by the 15th will be in a position to take the entire staff.

(4) [redacted] believes that we should immediately begin plans for deactivation of the Base if that is contemplated. He feels very strongly that regardless of what is going to happen after Base C moves out--whether the Base be turned over to SAC, continued in a skeleton manner under the present setup, or deactivated--plans should be formulated now. He is quite concerned over the fact that over 50 per cent of the equipment belongs to ABC and has to be returned by 1 January.

(5) [redacted] wants to know how he should handle the [redacted] drivers following deployment of Base B. The question came up because [redacted] had asked [redacted] to issue the necessary equipment. I explained to [redacted] that following departure of Base B and activation of Base C the [redacted] would be under his control, but it was definitely planned that they would be part of Base C.

(6) [redacted] made a point of the fact that his tour with us was for one year, and that he was definitely planning to leave the Project when his year is up.

b. Base B.

(1) [redacted] together with several members of his staff (no drivers) said he thought the U2 pilots should be paid more. He compared what the take-home pay of an AF major in flight status gets with what the drivers' contract provides and said he didn't think the difference was sufficient. I explained that this had been carefully studied out and if any changes were to be made, it would require a complete restudy and that I was not at all optimistic about this being done. I believe that the fact the drivers have become aware of the income tax they have to pay has caused them to realize that their take-home pay is not going to be as great as originally expected.

(2) [redacted] also asked about special allowances for the AF personnel when they are overseas. He can't see why they can't be considered on TDY when overseas. I explained to him what we had gone through with Base A as far as trying to get extra money for the AF personnel, but I don't believe my explanation was very satisfying.

(3) [redacted] has taken over in very good style. He has everything lined up for getting the personnel ready for processing. I feel certain, with possibly very few exceptions, Base B people will be ready for processing when the team comes.

(I put on the 25th.)

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(4) I was very glad that I allowed sufficient time to make a thorough and complete visit of the Base. The highlight of my trip was observing a test flight from briefing through debriefing. I was extremely impressed with the terrific job the pilots have to do and the conditions under which they have to perform. The morale, in general seems very high. There was very little complaining and a strong sense of dedication to the work.

[redacted]

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